

THE WOMAN WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN

A Sad Story of George Washington's Pretty Young Sweetheart.

A ROMANTIC TRUE STORY

Save for the Stupid Pride of Miss Smith's Hard Hearted Father, the Williamsburg Belle and Beauty Might Have Reigned as Our First Mistress of the White House.

Hard by the bare stone walls of the oldest insane asylum in America, in Williamsburg, Va., flourishes according to reports the only free tree in these United States. Standing beneath the old yew tree and looking toward the southeast across a rolling meadow watered by flowing springs, one sees almost within halting distance the mossy roof of a rambling old cottage.

More than a century and a half ago the massive oak-beamed timbers of the wide, low dwelling were erected. And when the master of the cottage, with his family, had once established his lares and penates, there might have been seen at



George Washington and Martha Custis.

Frequent intervals a gallant young cavalier who was said to show the rose of his well-bred steed, and, incidentally, of course, his own graceful equitation upon Tazewell avenue.

A ROMANTIC STORY.

For the owner of the cottage had a daughter.

Now, this young man who visited the cottage across the meadow on Tazewell avenue was Major George Washington. And of his visits there and what he did in consequence of the praise of a man and the weakness of a woman changed a nation's history. It is my purpose to tell as it was told to me in the language, one might almost say, of an eye witness.

It is precisely because it is one of those "important trivialities" which history overlooks that it is so well worth the telling. In Williamsburg very little is familiar with the tradition, and have it from a descendant of one of the oldest colonial families, a gentleman of the highest reputation to him his aunt, who died many years ago at a very advanced age and who knew General Washington well in his childhood, related this story as a matter of fact of which she had personal knowledge. It is one of those episodes which no woman ever forgets and my informant recalls how the good lady, his aunt, kept the story for rare occasions, and delivered the greatest satisfaction from telling of it.

The owner of the cottage on Tazewell avenue within the old yew tree was a man named Smith. He was a person of some means and much respectability in the old country. And these facts were also held in some favor at "the palace," where the colonial governors kept their royal suites in those days. Mr. Smith was blessed with a daughter who was one of the reigning beauties of the capital, and her own and proud father cherished matrimonial ambitions.

LOVELY MISS SMITH.

The society of Williamsburg was constantly strayed, if not improved, by the



WASHINGTON'S TRIUMPHAL PROGRESS.

addition of numerous young English officers and gentlemen, the younger sons of more or less noble houses, who frequently came to the colony to escape the tedium of the life of the old country. It was in the midst of these aristocratic young gentlemen that the society of the beautiful Miss Smith came to be greatly admired, much to the delight and gratification of Mr. Smith. The young lady, however, seems to have had a very pretty taste of her own and doubtless saw beneath the surface. For it is said that she passed all the gorgeous young rakes by and beneath her favors upon a Virginia gentleman of no great fortune or pretensions, though he had already begun to fill the public eye to wit, George Washington.

It was a real, old-fashioned, three volume love story—no usual, the stern and haughty parent had easily the best of it. For when Major Washington formally applied for permission to pay his addresses to the girl with honorable intent, her father taunted him with his poverty, laughed at his social pretensions and scornfully ordered him out of the house and forbade all further inter-

course with his daughter. The future president had to wait for his own and on his personal motion the episode would not have ended thus ignominiously. He would have waited, and when the time doubtless came to him, he would have been successful. But the girl, who was independent to the radical, a step and Washington was compelled to submit to a fate he could not overcome. It was not until he had exhausted every honorable means to possess his sweetheart, that Washington rode away and sought to efface his memory in difficult and dangerous enterprises. It is related that on his departure, the girl fell ill and well nigh died of grief and mortification.

THE WOMAN WHO WAS.

Those were busy days and time fled apace. The major was a colonel, a member of the House of Burgesses and a surveyor general of Virginia.

There was too, a sweet and stately woman, who day by day in the fashionable season, passed many a pleasant hour upon the rustic seat beneath the yew tree with Washington at her side. She was a widow, now, and her children were sleeping by her husband's side in the churchyard. But she was still young with a grace and charm which made her the first lady of the land by her right not less through the exalted position which fate was preparing for her.

Perhaps the very words which gave a mistress to the nation and made George Washington a happy husband were whispered beneath the yew, while he had been so directed a witness to a certain other courtship not so very far away.

WASHINGTON'S RETURN TO WILLIAMSBURG.

Time brought its changes to the people in the cottage, too, and they were not happy ones. For the sailmaker from overseas came and flitted and rode away. At last, however, there came another sailor who was in earnest. He was not a lord, nor a son of a lord, but a Virginian. This time the stern parent interposed no objections and they were married. And this was the worst mistake of all; for the man was a roistering, gaming, drinking blade, who made ducks and drakes of his wife's money and then abused her because the supply was exhausted. It appears that the only child of this union was a girl, who was quite like the girl and ruined the family.

At last there came a day the remembrance of which awakes a thrill of enthusiastic pride in war-worn Williamsburg. Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown, the American arms were everywhere victorious and the whole of Washington was hailed of all men as the savior of the country. And this day the army returned to Williamsburg to pass the winter and were given a reception fitting to their deeds and the means at hand. The city was in a fever and with patriotic enthusiasm.

On this occasion Washington did not ride a white horse, but a beautiful thoroughbred chestnut worthy of his master. He was surrounded by a staff of French and American officers, glittering in gold lace and decorations. Rochambeau and La Fayette rode on his either hand. His route had been through the city, bowing gravely and proudly to the wildly cheering people. As the head of the procession passed down Tazewell avenue, the way to Duke of Gloucester street, and the "palace," a pale slender woman came to the door of the cottage and stood with her hands pressed close above her bosom and her tears blurring the wistful eyes bent so eagerly upon the noble, bareheaded figure sitting so masterly upon the dancing chestnut. Washington saw and knew her in one keen glance above the heads of the cheering throngs and, checking his impatient animal, he bowed till his powdered hair mingled with his horse's mane. The woman attempted no courtesy, but nature could bear no more, and with a gasping sigh she fainted and was borne within, her nervous wreck. While the man whom her father had scornfully turned out of doors rode on to his great destiny, his victorious army at his back, the cheering multitude at his feet.

There is little more to tell. The former Miss Smith died soon after Washington's election to the presidency. Her family removed to Missouri. Here, in later years, a famous Virginian, Nathaniel Beverly Tucker, visited them and brought back to Williamsburg as his bride, Lucy Ann, daughter of the late Thomas Smith, S. S. A., who my informant believes, was a nephew of the woman who did not marry George Washington.

JOHN STUART BONNER.

THE USE OF COCAINE.

Horse Trainers and Jockeys Find it Useful as a Bracer For Their Nags.

Within a recent period cocaine has come into use on the race track as a stimulant. Horses that are worn and exhausted, or are uncertain as to speed and endurance, are given to it in grains of cocaine by the jockey, and the risk at the time of starting, or a few moments before.

The effects are very prominent, and a veritable muscular delirium follows, in which the horse displays unusual speed and action, and the driver has the feeling of a "kick" in the legs. The action of cocaine grows more transient as the use increases, and when a long period of racing follows before the cocaine is given, the horse becomes delirious and unmanageable, and leaves the track in a wild frenzy, often killing the driver, or he drops dead on the track from cocaine, although the cause is unknown to any but the owner and driver. Some horses

have been given as high as 50 grains at a time, but this is dangerous and only this means win a race. It appears that cocaine is only used in running races and is not given to horses in any other time. It is claimed that the flashing eyes and trembling excitement of the horse are strong evidence of the use of cocaine.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

THE BRIDGE BUILDERS.

We build a bridge of trust From night to morn, A myra arch of dreams Till day is born.

We build a bridge of trust From friend to friend, And often break the span We cannot mend.

We build a bridge of trust From shadow to light, And shadow figures steal across At peace forevermore.

—Florence A. Munroe in Detroit Free Press.

They range themselves in a semi-circle behind Mr. and Mrs. Tyler.

Kind friends, I have some news to tell—This house is burning. It is well that we should haste ourselves away And save our lives without delay.

Oh, let us not remain too long! Remain too long, too long, too long! Oh, let us not remain too long! Women of the Chorus—

What is this he tells us? It must be so. The building is on fire, And we must go.

Men of the Chorus—What is this he tells us? It must be so. The building is on fire, And we must go.

Grand Chorus—Oh, hasten! Oh, hasten! Oh, hasten! Our terror we would conceal,

And language fails to express the alarm That in our hearts we feel! Mr. and Mrs. Tyler—

Ah-h-h, language cannot express the fear That in their hearts they feel! (Enter the janitor.)

Janitor—Hold, I am here! Mr. Tyler—Ah, it is the janitor! Mrs. Tyler—

Can I believe my senses, Or am I going mad? It is the janitor! So, haste, oh, haste away!

Janitor—Such news I have to tell! Mr. Tyler—Speak and break the awful suspense! Mrs. Tyler—Yes, speak!

MISS NANCY'S ABSENCE.

Oh, I wonder what Miss Nancy gone, For de latch is on de do, En de sundowner say: En de goner say: En de sun don't shine no mo'.

Oh, I wonder what Miss Nancy gone, For de place look mighty still: En de wind he say: "She gone my way, I'll find her, dat I will!"

Oh, I wonder what Miss Nancy gone, While de shades creep en creep, En de wipwip! Fun crost de hill, Say: "I'm singin' her ter sleep!"

Oh, I wonder what Miss Nancy gone, For de moonlight say, too; But de moonlight say: "I'll light her home to you."

—Atlanta Constitution.

GRAND OPERA REALISM.

Tyler paid \$7 for two opera tickets. Although he slept through one duet he felt fully repaid for going, because Mrs. Tyler raved over the opera and wasted her superlatives on it. The "music was heavenly," the prima donna "superb" and the tenor, "magnificent."

There is nothing so irritating as real enthusiasm as the presence of calm scorn.

"Don't you like it?" asked Mrs. Tyler, as she settled back after the eighth recall of the motherly woman who had been singing the part of a 16-year-old maiden.

"I like the music, my dear, but grand opera drags so. Then the situations are so preposterous they all appear to me as if they were humors. When I see Romeo and Juliet die, both singing away as if they enjoyed it, I have to laugh."

"The idea!" "You take it in this last act. Those two fellows came out with the soldiers and announced that they were conspiring and didn't want to be heard by the people in the house, and then they snatched in chorus until they have been heard two miles away."

"No, you are prejudiced." "No, at all. I'll tell you, a grand opera's the funniest kind of a show if you only take the right view of it."

Thus they argued, and even after they arrived home she taunted him and announced that they were conspiring and didn't want to be heard by the people in the house, and then they snatched in chorus until they have been heard two miles away."

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"Well, I tell you that first day is one I'll never forget. I had looked with joy. I wanted to hug everybody and tell them my old self had died yesterday, and my new self was born. Why did you tell me when I first wrote that I would find this way?"

And another thus: "If you dumped a cart load of gold at my feet I would not bring such gladness into my life as your method has done."

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